

**In the Claims**

1. (Currently amended) A communications exchange for facilitating communication among a plurality of supply chain participants in an electronic marketplace to facilitate one or more marketplace transactions, comprising:

a communication interface ~~for sending and receiving~~ operable to send and receive messages among the plurality of supply chain participants in the electronic marketplace to facilitate one or more marketplace transactions;

an event container connected to the communication interface, ~~wherein received and operable to receive messages are sent to the event container from the communication interface as events, one or more of the messages and their corresponding events each being associated with~~ one or more marketplace transactions;

a condition container connected to the event container, ~~wherein the condition container contains comprising a plurality of condition instances each specifying one or more rules for determining whether to initiate an action defined by an action instance associated with the condition instance, a particular condition instance specifying whether to initiate the action defined in the associated action instance to facilitate one or more marketplace transactions in the electronic marketplace; and~~

an action container connected to the condition container, ~~the action container and containing a plurality of action instances, each action instance associated with one or more of the condition instances and defining an action operable to, when initiated, facilitate one or more marketplace transactions in the electronic marketplace;~~

~~wherein, when a set of one or more events received by the event container from the communication interface are determined to match~~ matches a predicate of a particular condition instance, an the action, defined in an the action instance associated with such the particular condition instance, is performed initiated by the communications exchange to facilitate the one or more marketplace transactions associated with the one or more events determined to match the predicate of the particular condition instance.

2. (Currently amended) The exchange of Claim 1, ~~further comprising: wherein the event container comprises a timer in the event container, wherein the timer generates operable to generate events related to time.~~

3. (Currently amended) The exchange of Claim 1, ~~wherein the condition instances are operable to:~~

~~interpreted~~ interpret the condition instances at run time, ~~wherein the condition instances can be;~~ and

~~changed~~ change the condition instances in response to user input while the exchange is operating without disrupting processing of events.

4. (Currently amended) The exchange of Claim 1, ~~wherein a~~ wherein at least one of the plurality of the action instances is operable to, ~~when performed,~~ generate a new event ~~which is~~ when the action defined by the action instance is initiated, the new event being sent to the event container.

5. (Currently amended) A communication system for facilitating communication among a plurality of supply chain participants in an electronic marketplace to facilitate one or more marketplace transactions, comprising:

~~a communications exchange; and~~

~~a plurality of user communications systems in the electronic marketplace connected to the exchange;~~

~~wherein the~~ a communications exchange includes for facilitating the communication among the plurality of supply chain participants in the electronic market place to facilitate the one or more marketplace transactions, the exchange in communication with the plurality of supply chain participants and comprising:

~~a communication interface for sending messages to, and receiving messages from, operable to send and receive messages among the user plurality of supply chain participants communications systems in the electronic marketplace to facilitate the one or more marketplace transactions;~~

~~an event container connected to the communication interface, wherein received and operable to receive messages from the communication interface are sent to the event container as events, one or more of the messages and their corresponding events each being associated with one or more marketplace transactions;~~

~~a condition container connected to the event container, wherein the condition container contains comprising a plurality of condition instances each specifying one or more rules for determining whether to initiate an action associated with an action instance associated with the condition instance, a particular condition instance specifying whether to initiate the action defined in the associated action instance to facilitate one or more marketplace transactions in the electronic marketplace; and~~

~~an action container connected to the condition container, the action container and containing a plurality of action instances, each action instance associated with one or more of the condition instances and defining an action operable to, when initiated, facilitate one or more marketplace transactions in the electronic marketplace;~~

~~wherein, when a set of one or more events received by the event container from the communication interface are determined to match matches a predicate of a particular condition instance, an the action, defined in an the action instance associated with such the particular condition instance, is performed initiated by the communications exchange to facilitate~~

the one or more marketplace transactions associated with the one or more events determined to match the predicate of the particular condition instance;

in response to input from a user, the communications exchange operable to dynamically modify a specified condition in the condition container independent of events in the event container and actions in the action container; and

in response to input from the user, the communications exchange operable to dynamically modify a specified action in the action container independent of events in the event container and conditions in the condition container.

6. (Currently amended) The exchange system of Claim 5, ~~further comprising:~~ wherein the event container of the communications exchange comprises a timer in the event container, wherein the timer generates operable to generate events related to time.

7. (Currently amended) The exchange system of Claim 5, wherein the exchange is operable to:

interpret the condition instances are interpreted at run time; and, wherein the condition instances can be changed

change the condition instances in response to user input while the exchange is operating without disrupting processing of events.

8. (Currently amended) The exchange system of Claim 5, ~~wherein a~~ wherein at least one of the plurality of the action instances, when performed, is operable to generate a new event which is when the action defined by the action instance is initiated, the new event being sent to the event container.

9. (Currently amended) A method for ~~handling messages in a communications system facilitating communication among a plurality of supply chain participants in an electronic marketplace to facilitate one or more marketplace transactions, comprising the steps of:~~

~~providing a plurality of conditions and~~ condition instances each associated with one or more events, wherein a ~~and specifying one or more rules for determining whether to initiate an action defined in an action instance associated with the condition causes an associated action to be performed when a set of event conditions is satisfied~~ instance, each action instance being associated with one or more of the condition instances and defining an action, a particular condition instance specifying whether to perform an action defined in the action instance associated with the particular condition instance, the action defined by the action instance associated with the particular condition instance operable to, when initiated, facilitate one or more marketplace transactions in the electronic marketplace;

~~receiving a plurality of messages, each message being treated as an event, one or more of the messages and their corresponding events each being associated with one or more marketplace transactions;~~

~~when a subset of events satisfies a condition, performing the associated action~~

determining whether the particular condition instance is satisfied by determining whether one or more of the messages received as events matches the predicate of the particular condition instance; and

if it is determined that one or more messages received as events satisfies the particular condition instance, initiating the action defined in the action instance associated with the particular condition instance to facilitate the one or more marketplace transactions associated with the one or more events determined to match the predicate of the particular condition instance in the electronic marketplace.

10. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 9, further comprising ~~the steps of:~~  
generating timing events; and  
~~satisfying a~~ determining that one or more messages interpreted as events satisfies the  
condition using at least one timing event combined with an event which is not a timing event.

11. (Original) The method of Claim 9, wherein the conditions are interpreted at run time, whereby changes to the conditions can be made while a computer system is executing.

12. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 9, wherein ~~at least one of the conditions causes more than one action to be performed when it is satisfied;~~

the condition is associated with more than one action; and  
if it is determined that one or more messages interpreted as events satisfies the condition,  
initiating the more than one actions associated with the condition.

13. (New) The exchange of Claim 1, wherein the messages sent and received by the communications interface comprise one or more of:

a request for a quote;  
a quote;  
shipping information;  
product availability information;  
delivery information; and  
a firm order.

14. (New) The exchange of Claim 1, wherein the electronic marketplace comprises one or more of:

customers;  
resellers;  
suppliers;  
manufacturers; and  
logistics providers.

15. (New) The exchange of Claim 1, operable to:  
receive definitions of condition instances from supply chain participants of the exchange;  
and

associate the definitions of condition instances with the condition container such that the supply chain participants of the exchange may delegate certain decisions to the exchange.

16. (New) The exchange of Claim 1, wherein one or more of the messages are initiated by a supply chain participant.

17. (New) The exchange of Claim 1, wherein one or more of the messages are initiated by a particular action contained in the action container.

18. (New) The exchange of Claim 1, wherein:  
in response to input from a user, the communications exchange is operable to dynamically modify a specified condition in the condition container independent of events in the event container and actions in the action container; and

in response to input from the user, the communications exchange is operable to dynamically modify a specified action in the action container independent of events in the event container and conditions in the condition container.

19. (New) The system of Claim 5, wherein the messages sent and received by the communications interface comprise one or more of:

- a request for a quote;
- a quote;
- shipping information;
- product availability information;
- delivery information; and
- a firm order.

20. (New) The system of Claim 5, wherein the electronic marketplace comprises one or more of:

- customers;
- resellers;
- suppliers;
- manufacturers; and
- logistics providers.

21. (New) The system of Claim 5, wherein the exchange is operable to:  
receive definitions of condition instances from supply chain participants of the exchange;  
and  
associate the definitions of condition instances with the condition container such that the  
supply chain participants of the exchange may delegate certain decisions to the exchange.

22. (New) The system of Claim 5, wherein one or more of the messages are initiated  
by a supply chain participant.

23. (New) The system of Claim 5, wherein one or more of the messages are initiated  
by a particular action contained in the action container.

24. (New) The method of Claim 9, wherein the messages sent and received by the  
communications interface comprise one or more of:

- a request for a quote;
- a quote;
- shipping information;
- product availability information;
- delivery information; and
- a firm order.

25. (New) The method of Claim 9, wherein the electronic marketplace comprises one  
or more of:

- customers;
- resellers;
- suppliers;
- manufacturers; and
- logistics providers.



26. (New) The method of Claim 9, wherein providing a plurality of conditions comprises:

receiving definitions of condition instances from supply chain participants of the exchange; and

associating the definitions of condition instances with the condition container such that the supply chain participants of the exchange may delegate certain decisions to the exchange.

27. (New) The method of Claim 9, wherein one or more of the messages are initiated by a supply chain participant.

28. (New) The method of Claim 9, wherein one or more of the messages are initiated by a particular action contained in the action container.

29. (New) The method of Claim 9, wherein:  
in response to input from a user, dynamically modifying a specified condition independent of events associated with the specified condition and actions associated with the condition; and

in response to input from the user, dynamically modifying a specified action independent of events associated with the action and conditions associated with the action.